

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 01658 241048Z

ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CAB-05 CIAE-00
COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 FAA-00
L-03 /049 W

-----118303 242140Z /64

R 241011Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7353
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY ROME

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 1658

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, SY

SUBJ: SYRIAN ARAB AIRLINES (SAA) NY SERVICE ON ICE; IS ANY ONE
LOOKING TO RENT A SEVEN FOUR SEVEN SP?

1. ECONOFF LEARNED THAT SYRIAN ARAB AIRLINE HAS PRESENTED TWO
PART PROPOSAL TO MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT RECOMMENDING AGAINST
SERVICE TO NY. PRESENT ESTIMATE IS THAT TRANS ATLANTIC
SERVICE WILL MEAN ONE TO ONE AND A HALF MILLION DOLLARS
ANNUAL OPERATING LOSS GIVEN PRESENT TRAFFIC. ONLY
POSSIBILITY AIRLINE COULD MAKE MONEY ON TRANS ATLANTIC RUN
WOULD BE ACTIVE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT CAMPAIGN PROMOTE TOURISM,
IN PARTICULAR CHARTERS, WHICH WOULD RAISE TRAFFICE PAST BREAK
EVEN POINT. COMMITTEE WILL ALSO RECOMMEND THAT ONE OF TWO
747SP JUMBO JETS BE LEASED. AT PRESENT SAA NEGOTIATING WITH
BRANIFF AIRLINES FOR 15 MONTHS DRY LEASE. NEGOTIATIONS ARE

BEING HELD UP BY OBJECTIONS FROM TECHNICAL STAFF OF
SYRIAN AIRLINES WHICH DOES NOT BELIEVE AIRLINE COULD MAINTAIN
LONDON SERVICE WITH ONE 747 SP ALONE. THEY RECOMMEND
"HOURS ONLY" WET LEASE OF SECOND AIRCRAFT.

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2.THERE IS SOME SPECULATION ON FUTURE FLEET REQUIREMENTS
FOR SAA. THERE IS GENERALLY ACCEPTED BELIEF THAT
AGREEING TO TWO BOEING 747S FLIGHTS FROM ABU DHABI WAS
A MISTAKE. WE ARE TOLD THAT OPERATING LOSSES OF AIRCRAFT
HAVE NOW GONE BEYOND PRESENT VALUE OF GIFT OF TWO AIRCRAFT AND
AIRLINE MANAGEMENT WOULD ALSO LIKE TO MAKE UP SERC IS SHORT-
FALL IN AIRLINES CARGO CARRYING CAPACITY AND BELIEVES TWO

OR THREE AIRBUS A300 AIRCRAFT WOULD BE MOST ATTRACTIVE FOR AIRLINE. HOWEVER, THEY ADVISE THAT THERE ARE MANY ESTABLISHMENT COSTS RELATING TO PURCHASE OF TOTALLY NEW LINE OF AIRCRAFT AND ARE RELUCTANTLY CONCEDING THAT UNLESS THERE IS A GENEROUS DONOR OUT THERE SOMEWHERE (IS THE GULF LISTENING) THEY WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE TO STANDARDISE ON THE 727.

FOR RCAA ROME: DO YOU KNOW OF ANY POTENTIAL CUSTOMER FOR SHORT DURATION WET LEASING 747SP? AIRLINE WOULD APPRECIATE ASSISTANCE.

MURPHY

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOURISM, AIRLINES, AIR ROUTES, LEASES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978DAMASC01658
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780131-0161
Format: TEL
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780329/aaaaaxzz.tel
Line Count: 74
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 45f737be-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3214077
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SYRIAN ARAB AIRLINES (SAA) NY SERVICE ON ICE; IS ANY ONE LOOKING TO RENT A SEVEN FOUR SEVEN SP?
TAGS: EAIR, SY, SYRIAN ARAB AIRLINES
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/45f737be-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014